

Water Words

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Waste:

Includes sewage and any and all other waste substances, liquid, solid, gaseous, or radioactive, associated with human habitation, or of human or animal origin, or from any producing, manufacturing, or processing operation, including waste placed within containers of whatever nature prior to, and for purposes of, disposal. The State Board's regulations contain a waste classification system which applies to solid and semi-solid waste which cannot be discharged directly or indirectly to water of the state and which therefore must be discharged to land for treatment, storage, or disposal in accordance with state regulations. There are four classifications of waste (listed in order of highest to lowest threat to water quality): hazardous waste, designated waste, nonhazardous solid waste, and inert waste.

Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR):

The order adopted by the regional boards that regulates discharges of waste to surface water and discharges of waste to land. WDRs are often synonymous with "permits."

Waste management facility:

The parcel of property where waste discharge operations are conducted. Such a facility may include one or more waste management units.

Waste management unit:

An area of land or a portion of a waste management facility used exclusively for waste discharge.

Wasteload allocation (WLA):

Term used in conjunction with the TMDL Program, a WLA is the portion of a receiving water's loading capacity that is allocated to one of its existing or future point sources of pollution. Discharge limits are usually required for the specific water quality criterion addressed by the TMDL.

Waste pile:

A waste management unit where only non-containerized, bulk, dry solid waste is discharged.

Waste stream:

The total flow of solid waste from homes, businesses, institutions, and manufacturing plants that is recycled, burned, or disposed of in landfills, or segments such as the "residential waste stream" or the "recyclable waste stream."

Waste treatment lagoon:

Impoundment made by excavation or earth fill for biological treatment of wastewater.

Waste treatment plant:

A facility containing a series of tanks, screens, filters and other processes by which pollutants are removed from water.

Waste treatment stream:

The continuous movement of waste from generator to treater and disposer.

Wastewater:

The spent or used water from a home, community, farm, or industry that contains dissolved or suspended matter (See also Effluent, Sewage).

Wastewater infrastructure:

The plan or network for the collection, treatment, and disposal of sewage in a community. The level of treatment will depend on the size of the community, the type of discharge, and/or the designated use of the receiving water.

Wastewater operations and maintenance:

Actions taken after construction to ensure that facilities constructed to treat wastewater are operated, maintained, and managed to reach prescribed effluent levels in an optimum manner.

Water column:

An imaginary column extending through a water body from its floor to its surface. Ambient water quality monitoring programs may seek to quantify the water quality of a representative water column. Samples may be taken from a point or points throughout the depth of the water column.

Water pollution:

(See Pollution.)

Water purveyor:

A public utility, mutual water company, county water district, or municipality that delivers drinking water to customers.

Water Quality Certification:

State certification required by the *Clean Water Act* that a federally permitted activity meets state water quality standards.

Water quality control:

The regulation of any activity or factor that may affect the quality of the state's waters. It includes the prevention and correction of water pollution and nuisance.

Water quality control plan (Basin Plan):

Each Regional Board establishes the beneficial uses of the waters within the region. The plan contains numeric and/or narrative water quality objectives and spells out a program by which the objectives can be achieved within their boundaries.

Water quality criteria:

Levels of water quality determined by the USEPA and expected to render a body of water suitable for its designated use. Criteria are based on specific levels of pollutants that would make the water harmful if used for drinking, swimming, farming, fish production, or industrial processes. See also, Water quality objectives.

Water quality management plan (WQMP):

A plan developed by a state water quality planning agency, certified by the governor, and approved by U.S.EPA for controlling pollution from wastewater treatment plants or NPS pollution.

Water quality objectives:

The limits or levels of water quality elements or biological characteristics established to reasonably protect the beneficial uses of water or to prevent problems within a specific area. Water quality objectives may be numeric or narrative. (See also Water quality criteria.)

Water quality order:

An official action taken by the State Board or a Regional Board to adopt enforceable requirements applicable to dischargers. Examples of water quality orders include the issuance of WDRs, and a written decision by the Water Board in response to a petition.

Water quality standards:

State-adopted and EPA-approved ambient standards for water bodies. The standards prescribe the use of the water body and establish the water quality criteria that must be met to protect designated uses. See also Water quality criteria, Water quality objectives.

Water quality-based effluent limitations:

Effluent limitations applied in NPDES permits when technology-based limitations would have a reasonable potential to cause or contribute to violations of water quality standards. (See also Technology-based limitations)

Water quality-based permit:

Informal term used to describe a permit that contains with water quality-based effluent limitations. (See also Water quality-based effluent limitations).

Water reclamation:

The treatment of waste water making it suitable for recycle or reuse; the transportation of treated wastewater to the place of use; and the actual use of treated wastewater for a direct beneficial purpose or controlled result that would not otherwise occur.

Water recycling:

(See Water reclamation)

Water Resources, Department of:

State department that operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides statewide water resources planning, regulates dam safety and controls floods.

Water solubility:

The maximum possible concentration of a chemical compound dissolved in water. See also Solubility.

Water-soluble substance:

A substance that can readily disperse through the environment.

Water storage pond:

An impound for liquid wastes designed to accomplish a degree of biochemical treatment. (See also Water treatment lagoon, Lagoon)

Water supplier:

One who owns or operates a public water system.

Water supply system:

The collection, treatment, storage, and distribution of potable water from source to consumer.

Water table:

The level of groundwater.

Water treatment lagoon:

(See Water storage pond, Lagoon)

Water well:

An excavation where the intended use is for location, acquisition, development, or artificial recharge of groundwater.

Water year:

Hydrologic records are compiled and summarized for 12 months. Different agencies may use different calendar periods for their water years.

Watershed:

The land area that drains into a stream. The watershed for a major river may encompass a number of smaller watersheds that ultimately combine at a common point.

Watershed approach:

A coordinated framework for environmental management that focuses public and private efforts on the highest priority problems within hydrologically defined geographic areas

Watershed area:

A region or area bounded peripherally by a divide and draining ultimately to a channel through which water flows or to a body of water.

Watershed management:

Water resource protection, enhancement, and restoration. Ideally, watershed management means developing a solution for each watershed that considers all its problems, includes all stakeholders in defining the problems, proposing solutions, and participating in implementing a common solution.

Weir:

1. A wall or plate placed in an open channel to measure the flow of water. 2. A wall or obstruction used to control flow from settling tanks and clarifiers to ensure a uniform flow rate and avoid short-circuiting.

Well:

A bored, drilled, or driven shaft or a dug hole whose depth is greater than the largest surface dimension and whose purpose is to reach underground water supplies or oil or to store or bury fluids below ground. (See also Injection well)

Well field:

Area containing one or more wells that produce usable amounts of water or oil.

Well injection:

The subsurface placement of fluids into a well. (See also Injection well)

Well monitoring:

Measurement by on-site instruments or laboratory methods of well water quality.

Well plug:

A seal installed in a borehole or well preventing movement of fluids.

Well point:

A hollow vertical tube, rod, or pipe terminating in a perforated pointed shoe and fitted with a fine-mesh screen.

Wellhead Protection Area:

A protected surface and subsurface zone surrounding a well or well field supplying a public water system to keep contaminants from reaching the well water.

Wetlands:

An area that is saturated by surface or ground water with vegetation adapted for life under those soil conditions, as swamps, bogs, fens, marshes, and estuaries.

Wettability:

The degree to which a fluid will spread into or coat a solid surface in the presence of other fluids into which it will not dissolve.

Wettable Powder:

Dry formulation that must be mixed with water or other liquid before it is applied.

Workplan:

A document that describes how an agency will perform required work or utilize certain funds.